

Director on the road!

During Acting Director Craig Stenning's first two weeks on the job, he has been out visiting with consumers, families, agencies and advocates. On top of this busy schedule to reconnect with "our community", he has officially represented the Department at several events.



Wednesday night he stopped by the Mentor Family Appreciation night in order to talk with individuals who are residing in shared living arrangements and the families that are hosting them. (See picture). He chatted with over sixty people and

brought a message of appreciation, support and encouragement. Among the many comments that he heard from the individuals living in their new shared living arrangements and their families were "It's the best thing that has ever happened to me. I have someone special living with me. I can talk with them and do a lot of things with them. Everybody needs someone." And "My new home gives me freedom. I have privacy but also someone to help me."



Earlier in the evening, Mr. Stenning brought the Department's greetings to the 25th Anniversary Annual meeting of NAMI-RI. "Despite the difficult financial times that we are facing, I'm actually excited about this opportunity because, for me, it has always been about the individual – not the system.



Our work involves daily interaction – daily support – daily engagement. Our work is to support the individual dignity of people affected by mental illness. Our work is about fighting the stigma of mental illness that each individual faces. Our work is to bring the tools of treatment, the message of hope and the promise of recovery." Mr. Stenning also congratulated the previous NAMI-RI Directors, Bill Emmet and Nicki Sahlin, Ph.d. who were being

honored as well as Dr. Achina Stein, Exemplary Psychiatrist; and Reed Cosper, Esq, Advocate of the Year.

Last week, Acting Director Stenning brought greetings to the Mental Health Consumer Advocates' (MHCAS) Pathway to Recovery Conference. His remarks included "Recovery is a message of hope and celebration. It is a difficult road for everyone and we commend your hard work. The end result is also different for everyone – a new life, changed by the illness but not limited by it."